

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 06979 101921Z

12

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EA-11 NEA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-19 AEC-11

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SAJ-01

DRC-01 /182 W

----- 111001

R 101533Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8661

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 06979 101921Z

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USLO PEKING
USMISSION BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN
AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMCONSUL MADRAS
CINCPAC
DIA WASHDC

S E C R E T MOSCOW 6979

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PFOR PARM, MARR, US, US, XO
SUBJ: SOVIET INTERESTS IN INDIAN OCEAN

REF: NEW DELHI 5616

1. SUMMARY. FROM MOSCOW, THE CHINA FACTOR LOOMS
LARGE IN INDIAN OCEAN CONSIDERATIONS. BECAUSE OF THE
SINO-SOVIET FACTOR, WE SHOULD STEER CLEAR OF
THE PEACE ZONE CONCEPT. END SUMMARY.

2. WE THINK THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE AN IMPORTANT
STRATEGIC INTEREST IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. THEY HAVE
PUBLICLY DESCRIBED THAT INTEREST WITH SOME ACCURACY:
SEA ACCESS TO THEIR OWN PACIFIC PORTS. WHAT THEY DO
NOT SAY PUBLICLY IS THAT, UNTIL THEY BUILD THE BAIKAL-
AMUR RAILWAY (WHICH WILL TAKE SEVERAL YEARS DESPITE
THE HIGH PRIORITY THEY HAVE ATTACHED TO IT), THEIR
ONLY OTHER SUPPLY ROUTE TO THE SOVIET FAR EAST IS THE
TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY. IN THE EVENT OF SINO-SOVIET
HOSTILITIES, THE CHINESE WOULD CERTAINLY TRY TO
INTERDICT THE TRANS-SIB, WHICH RUNS ALONG THE CHINESE
BORDER FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES. IF THIS WERE DONE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MOSCOW 06979 101921Z

SUCCESSFULLY, THE SOVIET FAR EAST COULD BE SUPPLIED
ONLY BY SEA AND AIR.

3. THE SOVIETS ARE THUS NOT LIKELY TO BE INTERESTED IN
ANY SCHEME WHICH WOULD MATERIALLY AFFECT THEIR ABILITY
TO PROTECT THEIR SHIPPING IN THE AREA AT A TIME OF
CRISIS WITH CHINA.

4. THIS DOES NOT PREVENT MOSCOW FROM OBLIGING THE PROPONENTS OF THE "ZONE OF PEACE" CONCEPT WITH VAGUELY ENCOURAGING PUBLIC STATEMENTS. BUT WE THINK THIS IS MOSTLY CROWD-PLEASING RHETORIC.

5. FROM HERE IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE U.S. WOULD BE MAKING A SERIOUS MISTAKE TO UNDERTAKE COMMITMENTS THAT IN FACT OR IN APPEARANCE WOULD TAKE THE U.S. NAVY OUT OF THE PICTURE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. IT SHOULD HANG IN THERE AS ONE OF THE IMponderABLES FOR THE SOVIETS TO STIR INTO THEIR CHINA POLICY. AND FOR THE CHINESE TO FACTOR INTO THEIR SOVIET POLICY.

6. SHOULD WE EMULATE MOSCOW AND INDULGE IN SOME PUBLIC RHETORIC OF OUR OWN IN FAVOR OF PEACE AND MOTHERHOOD IN THE INDIAN OCEAN? ONE PROBLEM IS THAT WE MIGHT MISLEAD BOTH THE SOVIETS AND THE CHINESE. ANOTHER DRAWBACK OF THIS APPROACH IS THAT IT RUNS INTO CREDIBILITY PROBLEMS AT A TIME WHEN CONGRESS IS BEING ASKED TO FUND A BASE IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT OCEAN. YET WE NEED A RESPONSE TO THE SOVIET ARGUMENT THAT A PERMANENT FACILITY BETRAYS A RELIANCE ON GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY, WHILE THE SOVIETS MERELY ENGAGE IN "FREE NAVIGATION." SUCH A RESPONSE IS APPARENTLY NEEDED TO REMOVE AN OBSTACLE IN U.S.-INDIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS, AS WELL AS OUR RELATIONS WITH SOME OTHER LITTORAL STATES IN VARYING DEGREES.

7. THIS SUGGESTS THAT A BILATERAL U.S.-INDIAN DECLARATION MIGHT BE USEFUL, PERHAPS ON THE OCCASION OF A HIGH-LEVEL VISIT, ESPOUSING THE PRINCIPLE OF FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION AND ENUNCIATING A JOINT VIEW THAT NAVAL COMPETITION IN INDIAN OCEAN IS NOT CONDUCTIVE TO RELAXATION OF TENSIONS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 MOSCOW 06979 101921Z

IN REGION. IN ORDER TO AVOID GIVING MISLEADING SIGNALS, WE SHOULD AVOID PUBLICLY SUBSCRIBING TO THE PEACE ZONE IDEA. PRIVATELY, IN ANSWER TO CONTINUING COMPLAINTS ABOUT DIEGO GARCIA, WE COULD REITERATE THAT WE BELIEVE MILITARY BALANCE IS THE KEY TO PEACE AND THAT THE EXPANSION OF OUR FACILITY SHOULD BE VIEWED IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT. THE INDIANS PRESUMABLY ARE CLEVER ENOUGH TO GRASP THE SINO-SOVIET IMPLICATIONS OF THIS FORMULATION. WHILE THE SINO-SOVIET ANGLE SHOULD BE KEPT FIRMLY IN MIND IN U.S. DELIBERATIONS, IT SHOULD NOT ONLY BE KEPT OUT OF OUR PUBLIC POSITION; WE ALSO SHOULD CAREFULLY SKIRT IT IN PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS.

STOESSEL

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, MILITARY POLICIES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MILITARY BASE AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MOSCOW06979
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740115-0560
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740558/aaaabzfk.tel
Line Count: 167
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: NEW DELHI 5616
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 APR 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <12 JUN 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET INTERESTS IN INDIAN OCEAN
TAGS: PFOR, PARM, MARR, US, XO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005